

Sight-Read like a Boss!



Modern piano pedagogy approaches reading music notation from multiple angles, stressing memorization and intervallic pattern recognition equally. It's sound wisdom. Sage performers quickly translate notation patterns into movement rather than analyzing every single note, although they certainly have memorized their notes by rote.

Reading music notation is an arduous task for beginning piano students. Pupils who memorize particularly easily and possess strong analytical skills may have an easier time. The rest of us will have to dedicate some time to the process. Struggling students lean heavily on me to provide many hints to get them going on a new piece. I make a concerted effort not to give away answers, preferring to talk them through the process, effectively training them to use deductive reasoning. Students in this stage may become frustrated by the grueling process and slow progression through repertoire.

I want to prime my students for success in piano and help them get the most out of their lessons by building a solid understanding of notation from the ground up. I need your help, however. Rote memorization needs to be done at home. Fortunately, there is a colorful array of media-rich options available to students, making good habits easy to incorporate into your routine. This small investment of time and energy now will quickly return enduring rewards, expediting advancement through repertoire, and tremendously boosting the student's level of enjoyment and confidence in their developing art.

Please join me in this effort to help your child master the language of music. Consider these study aids and choose one (or more) that best suits your child's learning style. Keep me in the loop by submitting this quick online feedback form: [SIGHT-READ LIKE A BOSS ACTION PLAN](#).

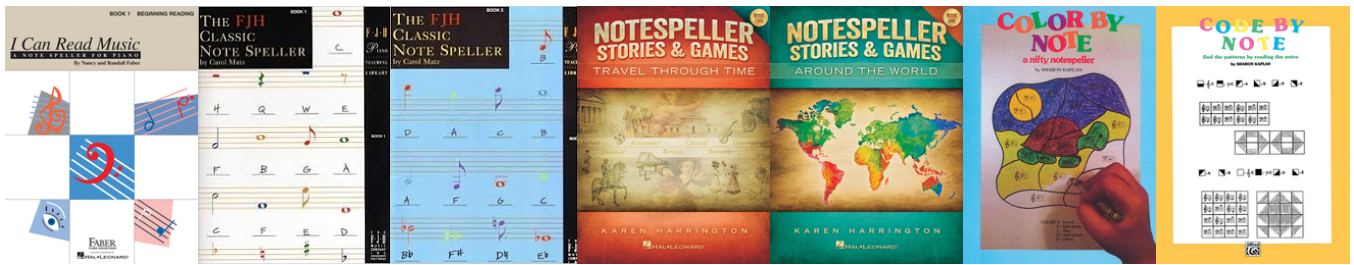
FLASHCARDS: Music notation flashcards are affordable and readily available at our local music stores as well as online retailers. You really can't go wrong with this vintage approach. We can isolate sets of notes to work on by dividing cards into ziplock bags labeled NOW and LATER. Five or ten minutes a day spent cycling through flashcards will produce a keen reader in record time. (TIP: Flashcards are priced more affordably at Ellis.)

Faber Music Piano Adventures FlashCards (Primer Level Through 2A Elementary). Available at Ellis Piano. [Buy on Amazon](#).

Complete Color Coded Flash Cards for All Beginning Music Students by Alfred Music. Available at Ellis Piano. [Buy on Amazon](#).

Music Flashcards by Jane Smisor Bastien. Available at Ellis Piano. [Buy on Amazon](#).





NOTESPELLERS: Notespellers are workbooks that focus exclusively on memorizing notation. I can easily assign a page or two for homework each week. These are appropriate for students who are past the pre-reading stage and are working on learning the notes on the staff.

I Can Read Music (3 Levels), by Faber: Traditional workbooks emphasizing guide notes and intervallic pattern recognition, correlate well with Faber's Piano Adventure Method Books. Available at Ellis Piano. [Level 1 on Amazon](#). [Level 2 on Amazon](#). [Level 3 on Amazon](#).

The FJH Classic Note Speller (Books 1 & 2): Classic comprehensive skill and drill style workbooks designed to increase note-reading confidence. Available at Ellis Piano. [Book 1 on Amazon](#). [Book 2 on Amazon](#).

Notespeller Stories & Games Around the World (Elementary), by Harrington: Colorful artwork, activities, games, and stories keep students engaged as they drill note-reading skills and learn facts from around the globe in the process. [Buy on Amazon](#).

Notespeller Stories & Games Travel Through Time (Intermediate), by Harrington: Students hone their note-reading skills as they discover interesting historical facts during a musical journey through time. [Buy on Amazon](#).

Color by Note (Books 1 and 2), by Kaplan: Students identify the notes, each with a specified color, and then color in the designated area, creating a pretty picture. Notes are added in a logical sequence, with continuous reinforcement of reading in both clefs. Available at Ellis Piano. [Book 1 on Amazon](#). [Book 2 on Amazon](#). (Monster and Christmas themed versions are also available on Amazon.)

Code by Note (Books 1 and 2), by Kaplan: 'Solving the code' by reading the notes will result in great geometric designs. This project is suitable for every note reader, including beginning students and advanced readers. Available at Ellis Piano. [Book 1 on Amazon](#). [Book 2 on Amazon](#).

APPS: The most significant advantage of apps is that our devices seem to always be with us, making them easy to pull out during lag time. Some students have made a great habit of transforming their morning commute to school into study time, via notation apps. There are countless apps available. Here are a few winners to jumpstart your search.

Music Flash Class, by Henry Flurry: A customizable flashcard based app. [Buy in iTunes](#).

Note Quest-Piano Flash Cards: This one is a standout because students can select one of two modes, real or virtual piano. In real piano mode, students playback notes on their instrument and they are evaluated using note-recognition technology. Pretty cool! [Buy in iTunes](#).

Note Flash Music Sight-Reading: Using note-recognition technology, the app encourages fluency by rewarding speed with progress graphs. [Buy in iTunes](#).

Musictheory.net: A comprehensive [online](#) series of free theory lessons and exercises. Their corresponding app, [Tenuto](#), is ideal to have on the go. It will work with beginning through advanced levels; however, young students will need help setting parameters and navigating the app's many options.

